THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA) : (a) Various steps taken are as under :—

(i) Use of more and more welded rails leading to reduction in number of fish plated joints.

(ii) The design has been finalized for trial for anti theft fish bolts and Elastic Rail Clip.

(iii) Burring of two fish bolts at joints, one on each rail, on the vulnerable sections.

(b) Yes, Sir. 32 Nos. Elastic Rail C ps were found missing at Km. 15/11-12 on up line between Shakurbasti and Nang oi stations. This was noticed by Railway keyman during his daily inspection.

(c) FIR No 3/2003 has been lodged on 22-2-03 with Government Railway Police/Delhi Kishanganj who are investigating the matter.

Shortage of wagons for wheat export

5221. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether export of wheat had been hampered during the last few months due to shortage of rail wagons;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of wagons demanded by wheat exporting agencies during October - December 2002;

(d) the number of wagons supplied by railways, during the said period for export of wheat; and

(e) the measures taken by Railways to supply adequate number of wagons for wheat export ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA) : (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Concession against vacant seat to senior citizens

† 5222. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a senior citizen travelling on ordinary ticket in the train does not avail himself of the thirty per cent of concession in case of getting reservation against vacant seat;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether such a facility is available in the booking counter itself; and

(c) if so, the measures being taken to immediately do away with such a disparity and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA) : (a) The senior citizen concession is granted, in Mail/Express fares of all classes including unreserved classes and fares of Rajdhani/ Shatabadi/Jan Shatabadi trains, at the booking/reservation counters only.

(b) The facility is available only at the booking/reservation counters.

(c) As a matter of policy, all concessions are granted at booking/reservation counters only and no concession is granted in train.

Benefits to Senior Citizens

5223. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) what are the age limits prescribed for senior citizens (both male and female) and what are the benefits allowed to them for performing rail journey;

(b) whether Government are aware that wait listed tickets issued to senior citizens and other eligible for concessional tickets are rarely confirmed and preference to confirm the tickets is given to those who pay full amount for the tickets; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard and whether the existing norms for confirmation of tickets are proposed to be modified to benefit the senior citizens and others ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA) : (a) All senior citizens, men as well as women, of minimum 60 years of age are entitled to 30% concession in Mail/ Express fares of all classes and fares of Rajdhani/ Shatabdi/Jan Shatabdi group of trains. The other benefits granted to senior citizens are as under :—

(i) On major computerized Passenger Reservation System (PRS) locations, senior citizens are dealt with on a separate counter.

(ii) In the computerized PRS, there is a provision to provide lower berths automatically to male passengers of 60 years and above and female passengers of 45 years and above subject to availability of accommodation at the time of booking.